



RR

REASON & REVELATION

A Monthly Journal of Christian Evidences

SEPTEMBER 2022 • VOL. 42 • NO. 9

Making Sense of **LIFE & DEATH**

AP'S NEW BOOK
Scientists Speak Out...

“*Unknown
Tongue*”?

Making Sense of Life and Death

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

FROM a purely physical earthly perspective, death is dreadful. The idea of not being able to take our next breath is terrifying. The thought of our beating heart stopping permanently is frightening. The mental images of dying in a car wreck, a house fire, a terrorist attack, or in some other tragic manner are unnerving, to say the least. Indeed, from a purely **naturalistic** perspective, there is no bigger downer than death.

Earthly-thinking humans fear death because they do not want to go out of existence forever. All one knows is being alive, existent, and self-aware. Humans know and crave continual mindfulness while fearing mindless nonexistence. People generally do not want their conscious state to cease permanently. They do not want to be separated forevermore from those whom they love. They do not want to forever cease doing the many things that bring them pleasure and happiness. They do not want to give up what they have in this (perceived) one and only life.

The atheistic (naturalistic) view of death is “the end.” At the end of physical life is “nothingness.” The very best that humanity has to look forward to is complete nonexistence. People have no choice in the

matter. Since, according to atheists, the physical realm and physical life are all that exist, death is the total termination of a human being.

KILLING...AND CRITICISM OF THE GOD OF THE BIBLE

ATHEISTS and agnostics often question how anyone can claim to believe in a God Who is said to have ended the lives of humans—of millions or perhaps even billions of human lives throughout history. How could a kind Creator “destroy man...from the face of the earth” in the days of Noah (Genesis 6:7)? How could a gracious God rain “brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah” (Genesis 19:24), “turning the cities...into ashes” (2 Peter 2:6), and destroying all the people (Luke 17:29)? How could a loving Lord kill both parents and their children during these events and many others (e.g., Joshua 9-11)?¹

Some time ago, I spoke with a nice gentleman in the waiting room of a doctor’s office. I quickly found out that he was an atheist. When I asked why he was an atheist, he immediately said: “Because God is a murderer.” This gentleman simply could not harmonize (1) a “kind Creator” with (2) a “killer.”

DOES ATHEISM NOT JUSTIFY THE KILLING OF HUMANS?

ONE is compelled first to ask the atheist upon what basis he deems the killing of a human being as wrong or evil? If we all came from nothing, are going to be nothing, and nothing is **objectively** of more value than anything else, then choosing to stop a human heart from beating is no more “wrong” than smashing a clump of clay, burning a tree, or frying a chicken. As leading unbelievers have admitted, atheism logically implies, “**Everything** is permitted,”² **including murder**. After all, according to naturalistic evolution, “We are animals.”³ Allegedly, “You are an animal, and share a common heritage with earthworms....”⁴ Thus, according to atheist Jo Marchant, “We should act like the animals we are.”⁵ And, among other things, animals regularly kill animals (often even their own kind) as well as human beings.

Do atheists not frequently justify the murder of unborn humans who are fully developed physically? Renowned atheist Peter Singer indicated in 2000 that it would not even be wrong to kill a disabled child **who had already been born**. He wrote: “[K]illing a disabled infant is not morally equivalent to killing a person. **Very often it is not wrong at all.**”⁶

Thirteen years later, the *Journal of Medical Ethics* published an article by secular bioethicists Dr. Alberto Giubilini⁷ and Dr. Francesca Minerva⁸ in which they argued “that what we call ‘**after-birth abortion**’ (**killing a newborn**) **should be permissible** in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled.”⁹ Taking atheism to its logical conclusion, they continued, declaring:

The alleged right of individuals (such as fetuses and newborns)

to develop their potentiality, which someone defends, is over-ridden by the interests of actual people (parents, family, society) to pursue their own well-being.... Actual people's well-being could be threatened by the new (even if healthy) child requiring energy, money and care which the family might happen to be in short supply of....¹⁰

Giubilini and Minerva concluded, saying:

If criteria such as the costs (social, psychological, economic) for the potential parents are good enough reasons for having an abortion even when the fetus is healthy...then the same reasons which justify abortion should also **justify the killing** of the potential person when it is at the stage of a newborn....

[W]e do not put forward any claim about the moment at which after-birth abortion would no longer be permissible, and we do not think that in fact more than a few days would be necessary for doctors to detect any abnormality in the child. In cases where the after-birth abortion were requested for non-medical reasons, **we do not suggest any threshold**, as it depends on the neurological development of newborns, which is something neurologists and psychologists would be able to assess.

[W]e do not claim that after-birth abortions are good alternatives to abortion.... However, if a disease has not been detected during the pregnancy, if something went wrong during the delivery, or if economical, social or psychological circumstances change such that taking care of the offspring becomes an unbearable burden on someone, **then people should be given the chance of not being forced to do something they cannot afford.**¹¹

Yes, some leading atheists have been bold enough to take their earthly, naturalistic, evolutionary ideas to

their logical conclusion (at least theoretically), arguing **for** the killing of healthy, innocent newborns, **even when others would love to adopt the children.**¹²

Thus, some of the world's leading atheists have justified murdering human beings, even when doing so means the taking of the **only life** that child will have (according to naturalistic atheism). So how exactly can atheists objectively and non-hypocritically condemn God for taking the lives of various human beings?

THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF LIFE AND DEATH

DOES a defendant have a right to a fair trial? Does he get a chance to take the stand and testify on his own behalf? If the God of the Bible is going to be criticized for His taking of human life at times throughout history, then it is only fair to allow the Bible to explain God's actions (to the extent that it does). Instead of hastily condemning the Creator as an unjust, unloving murderer, an honest-hearted, fair-minded person would give God a sufficient hearing.

Did You Create Yourself?

Where did you come from? Did you come into existence of your own will and power? Where did the first humans come from? How did the Universe and everything in it come into being?

Whereas atheistic evolution contends we are ultimately the result of one big cosmic accident, the Bible says just the opposite. The all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal God intentionally "made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them," including human beings (Exodus 20:11; Genesis 1:26-27). Out of nothing, He created everything. Out of non-life, He made life. "[A]ll things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians

1:16, NIV). "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" (John 1:3, NASB). "[I]n Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17, NASB). Even now, He is "upholding all things by the word of His power" (Hebrews 1:3). "[H]e Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:25-26, ESV).

A biblical view of God, life, and death cannot possibly be grasped without first understanding that God created everything, and thus **He owns everything**. God rhetorically asked the patriarch Job, "Who has been first to give to Me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the entire heaven is Mine" (Job 41:11, NASB). "Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the Lord your God, also the earth with **all** that is in it" (Deuteronomy 10:14). "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world **and those who dwell therein**" (Psalm 24:1). "It is He Who has made us, and **not we ourselves.**"¹³ We are **His** people and the sheep of **His** pasture" (Psalm 100:3).

Adam and Eve did not give themselves life, nor did we bring ourselves into being. "It is **He** Who made us" (Psalm 100:3, NIV). Thus, "We are His people" by creation. By His own doing, God created and owns the Universe and "those who dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1), including you and me. Though perhaps not the deepest nor the most meaningful way to make sense of life and death, the fact is, the Creator can do with the lives of His creation whatever He so chooses (in harmony with His Divine will).¹⁴ When Jesus prophesied of the God-glorifying way in which the apostle Peter would die (John 21:18-19), impetuous Peter wanted to know how the apostle

John would die: “But Lord, what about this man?” (21:21). How did the Creator and the One Who has “[a]ll authority...in heaven and on earth” respond to His dear friend Peter (Matthew 28:18)? Jesus said: “If it is My will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!” (John 21:22, RSV). In response to his immense suffering, Job reasoned: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21).

Interestingly, in 2016 Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson, one of America’s most well-known agnostic evolutionary astrophysicists, made some telling admissions at the American Museum of Natural History about the nature of the Universe. According to Dr. Tyson, “the likelihood of the universe being a simulation ‘may be very high.’”¹⁵ News organizations reported that Tyson indicated “it’s **not** too hard to imagine that some other creature out there is far smarter than us.”¹⁶ Perhaps we’re just “some sort of alien simulation.”¹⁷ Tyson went so far as to say, “[I]t is easy for me to imagine that everything in our lives is just the creation of some other entity for their entertainment. I’m saying, the day we learn that it is true, I will be the only one in the room saying, I’m not surprised.”¹⁸

Though he contends that he’s never seen evidence of the existence of God, Dr. Tyson has no problem admitting that he would not be surprised if god-like **aliens** made our Universe for their pleasure. Question: if such were the case (theoretically speaking), would the aliens not **own** their creation and have the right to do with it as they please?¹⁹

Truly, human life and death only **begin** to make sense upon first coming to the conclusion that (1) God exists,²⁰ and (2) He created us. What’s more, by creation, He owns

us and has the authority and right to remove us from the Earth, **just as He had the right to put us here to begin with.** This is not to say that God caused all or even most deaths throughout history. But make no mistake about it, if God, in His all-knowing, holy, just, and loving ways, chose to remove you or me from this Earth, He has every right to do so (without Him being morally defective).

Did You Create Your Soul?

We cannot begin to understand the depth of the life-and-death question until we come to the acknowledgment that we are more than mere matter. We are not measly “meat machines.” We are not simply chemicals bouncing around in circles. Those who are critical of the Creator’s handling of human life and death must recognize that the physical death of our body is not the end.

God formed Adam’s body “from the dust of the ground” (Genesis 2:7, NIV) and Eve’s body from Adam’s side (Genesis 2:21). Since then, humankind multiplied²¹ according to God’s created Law of Biogenesis. Just as vegetation and animals have reproduced “according to their kind” since Creation (Genesis 1:11-12, 21, 24-25), Adam and Eve and all of their descendants have multiplied after their kind. More important, every time a human being is “formed...in the womb” (Jeremiah 1:5) according to the Creator’s laws of biology and sexual reproduction, **God also “forms the spirit of man within him”** (Zechariah 12:1). God is “the **Father of spirits**” (Hebrews 12:9). Indeed, when we die, “the dust returns to the earth as it was, and **the spirit returns to God Who gave it**” (Ecclesiastes 12:7, ESV).

From the beginning to the end of the Bible, readers are informed and repeatedly reminded that we are actually **immortal souls** who

inhabit physical bodies on a physical Earth for a relatively short period of time. At death, the spirit separates from the body. When Rachel died, Genesis 35:18 says, “her soul was departing”; it separated from her lifeless body. After the death of Jairus’ daughter, Jesus commanded her to “arise,” after which “**her spirit returned**, and she arose immediately” (Luke 8:54, 55). Implied in this statement is the fact that her spirit had departed from her body at death. As James wrote: “[T]he body without the spirit is dead” (James 2:26). Where did the spirits of Rachel and Jairus’ daughter go? To the realm of departed spirits, known as *sheol* in the Old Testament and *hades* in the New Testament (cf. Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27; Luke 16:23). At the crucifixion, Jesus told the penitent thief on the cross, “[T]oday you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). The reason Jesus could truthfully make this statement is that, while Christ’s dead body was placed in a tomb for three days, His spirit went to the part of the hadean realm known as paradise (Acts 2:27; Luke 23:43), along with the spirit of the thief on the cross.²²

According to Scripture, man neither created his body nor his soul. Both logically belong to God by creation. He brought human bodies and souls into existence, and when we die, all souls return to God (ultimately) for judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:7, 14). Thus, Jesus taught: “My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!” (Luke 12:4-5).

Are You the Perfect Judge?

Whereas humanity is quite limited in knowledge and is flawed

with sin by choice,²³ including being susceptible to such things as dishonesty, self-deception, greed, and injustice, the Creator is supremely good (Mark 10:18), all-loving (1 John 4:8), perfectly holy (Leviticus 11:44-45), and 100% just. “His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4). The psalmist declared of God: “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your

The atheist says that God is a murderer. How could a good and loving God kill millions or billions of people?

face” (Psalm 89:14). “God shows no partiality nor takes a bribe” (Deuteronomy 10:17; cf. Acts 10:34-35). There never has been and never will be a Judge as good as God. He knows everything, sees everything, and judges everyone perfectly—in complete harmony with His holy, loving, and just nature.

But the atheist says that God is a murderer. How could a good and loving God kill millions or billions of people? First, killing evildoers is not necessarily antithetical to love. Loving, merciful police officers, who are constantly saving the lives of the innocent, have the authority (from God and governments—Romans 13:1-4) to kill a wicked person who is murdering others. (Do atheists not want terrorists killed when doing such would stop the killing of others, including their loved ones?) Kind, just judges have the authority to sentence depraved child rapists to death. Loving-kindness and cor-

poral or capital punishment are not antithetical.

Prior to conquering Canaan, God commanded the Israelites, saying, You shall not hate your brother in your heart.... You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.... And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself (Leviticus 19:17-18,33-34; cf. Romans 13:9).

The faithful Jew was expected, as are Christians, to “not resist an evil person” (Matthew 5:39) but rather “go the extra mile” (Matthew 5:41) and “turn the other cheek” (Matthew 5:39). “Love,” after all, “is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:10; cf. Matthew 22:36-40). Interestingly, however, the Israelite was commanded to punish (even kill) lawbreakers, including (and especially) fellow Israelites. Just five chapters after commanding the individual Israelite to “not take vengeance,” but “love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18), God twice said that murderers would

receive the death penalty (Leviticus 24:21,17).

Second, unlike the foolish, impulsive, quick-tempered reactions of humanity (Proverbs 14:29), the Lord is “slow to anger and great in mercy” (Psalm 145:8). He is “long-suffering..., not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Immediately following a reminder to the Christians in Rome that the Old Testament was “written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope,” the apostle Paul referred to God as “the God of patience” (Romans 15:4-5). Throughout the Old Testament, the Bible writers portrayed God as long-suffering.

- Though in Noah’s day, “the wickedness of man was great in the earth” and “every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5), “the Divine longsuffering waited” (1 Peter 3:20). (It seems as though God delayed flooding Earth for 120 years as His Spirit’s message of righteous-

(cont. on p. 104)

Reason & Revelation is published monthly by Apologetics Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, AL. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **Reason & Revelation**, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117; **ISSN:**[1542-0922] **USPS#** 023415.

Apologetics Press is a non-profit, tax-exempt work dedicated to the defense of New Testament Christianity. Copyright © 2022. All rights reserved.

Editor:

Dave Miller, M.A., M.Div., M.A.R., Ph.D.*
(*Communication, Southern Illinois University)

Associate Editor:

Jeff Miller, M.S., Ph.D.*
(*Biomechanical Engineering, Auburn University)

Annual Subscription Rates:

\$14.00	Domestic
\$12.00	Domestic Bulk (5+ TO SAME ADDRESS)
\$14.00	Canada & Overseas (PLUS SHIPPING)

General inquiries, changes of address, or international callers:

Phone: (334) 272-8558
Fax: (334) 270-2002

Orders:

Phone: (800) 234-8558
Fax: (800) 234-2882

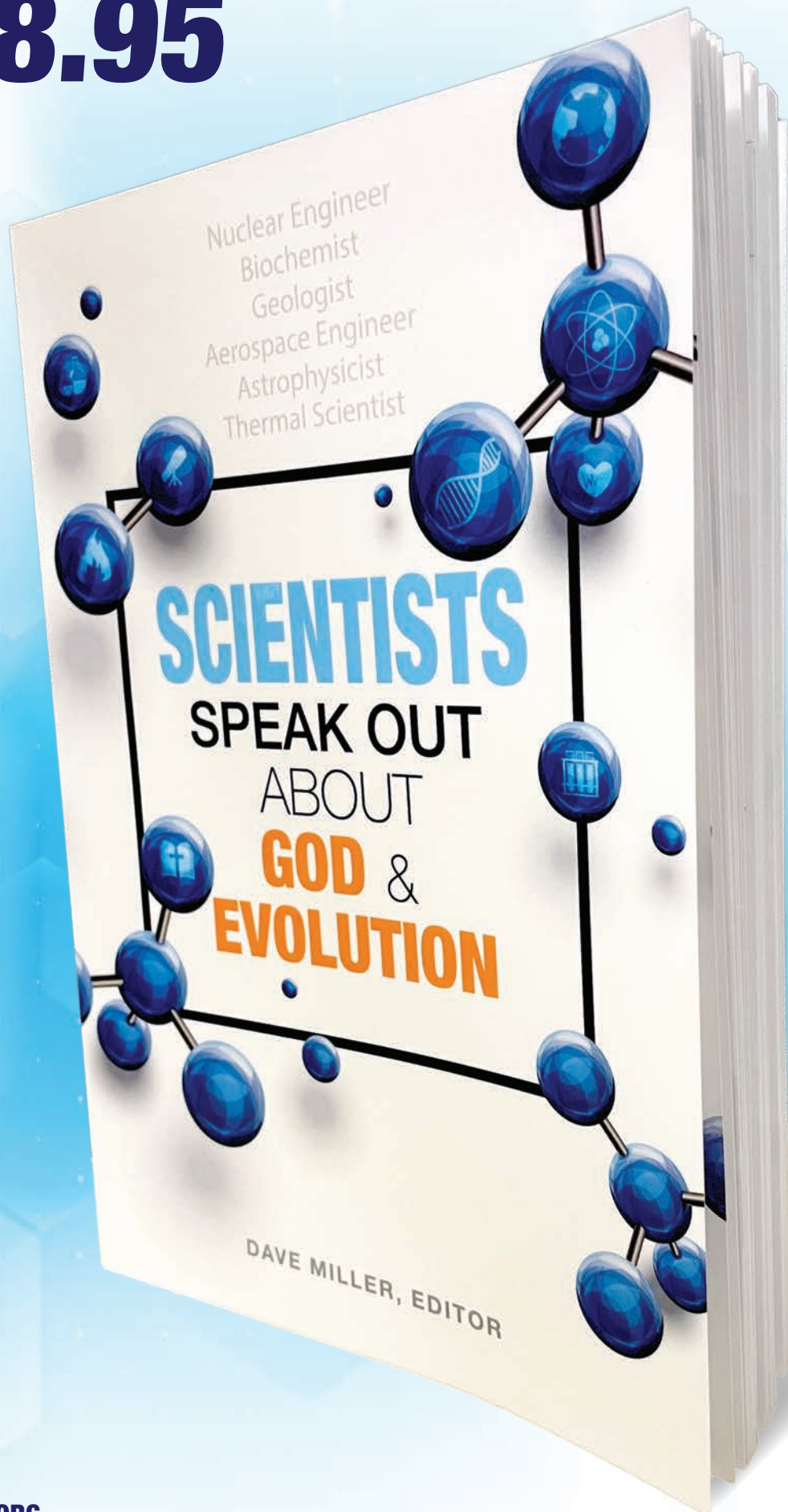
On-line Web store/catalog, subscription order/renewal form, current issues, archives, and other information (all orders processed on a secure server):

URL: www.ApologeticsPress.org
E-mail: mail@ApologeticsPress.org

Discovery—Scripture & Science for Kids is a sister publication for children. For more information, please contact our offices or visit the Discovery Web site at:
URL: www.DiscoveryMagazine.org



\$8.95



For more
information,
scan the QR
code or visit

STORE.APOLOGETICSPRESS.ORG

SCIENTISTS SPEAK OUT ABOUT GOD & EVOLUTION

- The scientific community is thoroughly dominated by naturalists and atheists.
- However, a considerable number of credibly credentialed scientists reject the naturalistic framework and organic evolution.
- Many believe instead in the God of the Bible and the Bible's depiction of Earth history and the "origin of species."
- Join six credentialed scientists as they explore:

Proofs of God

- Flight Design
- Natural Attenuation
- Morphing Flight
- Design Rules
- God's Electrical Heavens
- The Laws of Thermodynamics
- Autonomous Control of Creation
- Harmony of Science and Scripture

Proofs Against Evolution:

- Evolution is Religion
- Life: Not Made from Scratch
- "Recycled Genes"
- Heterozygous Lethal Mutations
- Assumptions and the Age of the Earth
- Horizontal Gene Transfer
- Science vs. the Big Bang

APOLOGETICS PRESS
(800) 234-8558
APOLOGETICSPRESS.ORG

ness was preached to a wicked world—Genesis 6:3; 2 Peter 2:5.)

- In the days of Abraham, God ultimately decided to spare the iniquitous city of Sodom, not if 50 righteous people were found living therein, but only **10** righteous individuals (Genesis 18:16-33).
- And what about prior to God's destruction of the Canaanite nations? Did God quickly decide to cast them out of the land? Did He respond to the peoples' wickedness like an impulsive, reckless madman? Or was He, as the Bible repeatedly states and exemplifies, longsuffering? Indeed, God waited. He waited more than four centuries to bring judgment upon the inhabitants of Canaan. Although the Amorites were already a sinful people in Abraham's day, God delayed in giving the descendants of the patriarch the Promised Land. He would wait until the Israelites had been in Egypt for hundreds of years because at the time that God spoke with Abraham, "the iniquity of the Amorites" was "not yet complete" (Genesis 15:16).²⁴ In Abraham's day, the inhabitants of Canaan were not so degenerate that God would bring judgment upon them. However, by the time of Joshua (more than 400 years later), the Canaanites' iniquity was full, and God used the army of Israel to destroy them.

Yes, God is longsuffering, but His **long**suffering is **not** an "eternal" suffering. His patience with impenitent sinners eventually ends. It ended for a wicked world in the days of Noah. It ended for Sodom and Gomorrah in the days of Abraham. And it ultimately ended for

the inhabitants of Canaan, whom God justly destroyed.

But What About All of the Innocent Whom God Has Killed?

The children in the Flood, in Sodom and Gomorrah, or in the land of Canaan were not guilty of their parents' sins (cf. Ezekiel 18:20); they were sinless, innocent, precious human beings (cf. Matthew 18:3-5).²⁵ So how could God justly take the lives of children, any children, who "have no knowledge of good and evil" (Deuteronomy 1:39)?

First, as we noted earlier, God owns all life and has the right to remove us from the Earth (for the righteous purposes that He has), just as He had the right to put us here to begin with. At times in history, God took the physical lives of wicked human beings out of righteous judgment. At other times (as in the case of children), lives were taken for merciful reasons.

But how could the killing of innocent children by the Creator ever be loving and merciful? Surely it would be when such an ending of physical life among terribly wicked human beings immediately results in the innocent being ushered into paradise (cf. Luke 16:22a; 23:43).²⁶ No one ever says, "God was mean" for cutting short Enoch's righteous earthy life, taking him away from his family and friends, and ushering him into a blessed afterlife (Genesis 5:21-24; Hebrews 11:5). No one condemns the Creator for taking Elijah "up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11) rather than dying of natural causes and being "buried at a good old age," as was Abraham (Genesis 15:15; 25:8). Admittedly, the ascensions of Enoch and Elijah were not immediately preceded by deaths in a flood or fire, but were the ultimate effects not the same? Enoch, Elijah, as well the innocent in Sodom, etc., were on Earth one moment...and in paradise the next.

It surely brought God no joy to see the innocent suffer momentarily alongside their wicked counterparts whom He judged, but to borrow the words of the apostle Paul: "[T]he sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). By the grace of God, "[O]ur light affliction, which is but for a **moment**, is working for us a far

*The ending of human life
as we know it neither makes
God a bloodthirsty murderer
nor is it something that
humanity has to dread.*

more exceeding and **eternal weight of glory**" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Consider one other comparison. The New Testament repeatedly reveals that Jesus will return at some point in the future (Matthew 24:36-25:46; Acts 1:11). Jesus "will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). When He does return, **the normal earthly existence that every human being on the planet has at that time, will immediately cease.** The (perhaps) billions of people on the Earth at that moment may not die a normal death, but **in a sense**, they might as well have. Their temporal, mortal bodies will be changed into bodies fit for eternity. Our **current** "flesh and blood" will neither inherit heaven nor hell.²⁷ Thus, in reality, God taking the lives of innocent human beings in periods of earthly judgment upon the wicked throughout history (transporting the innocent into paradise) is no more inappropriate than God

discontinuing the “normal” earthly lives of billions of people upon the return of Jesus.²⁸ The fact is, the ending of human life as we know it neither makes God a bloodthirsty murderer nor is it something that humanity **has** to dread. In truth, God actually wants everyone to be able to look forward to it.

You Do Not Have to Be Scared to Die

Instinctively, all living creatures, including humans, seem to want to live. Antelopes do not walk up to lions in hopes of being eaten. Seals do not waddle up to hungry polar bears on purpose. Animals and humans seek to **escape** death, not seek it out. People (including Christians) often exert much mental and physical effort to keep from drowning, being run over by a car, getting shot, or catching some deadly disease. Even the apostle Paul eluded “deaths often” (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). The Creator seems to have hardwired into His creation a desire to preserve our physical lives. It is natural (and involuntary) simply to breathe. If someone tries to suffocate us, survival instincts kick in as we “fight for life.”

Having a desire to live, and even to live a **long** life (Genesis 15:15; 25:8; Ephesians 6:2-3), is certainly not unnatural or sinful. However, in His infinite love and wisdom, God has made it so that **no one** has to be scared of mankind’s most dreaded foe: death. We may instinctively not want to die, but intellectually

In His infinite love and wisdom, God has made it so that no one has to be scared of mankind's most dreaded foe: death.

and emotionally, **no one has to be scared to die** (Hebrews 2:14-15). In fact, such hopeful confidence in a peaceful, painless, and spectacular life after death is the message of the Gospel.

“[A]ll have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). And, since God is 100% pure, holy, and just, and cannot fellowship sin,²⁹ “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23)—an eternal separation from God and all that is good (2 Thessalonians 1:9). The Good News is that “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). Jesus, the “lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19), was the perfectly pure sacrifice Who took the punishment of our sin upon Himself and died in our place. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16-17).

The apostle Paul began 1 Corinthians 15 by reminding the Christians in Corinth that “the Gospel” is summarized in these words: “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...was buried, and...He rose again the third day” (15:1-4). Paul concluded this same chapter by asking, “**O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?**... But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (15:55,57). Jesus’ victorious resurrection from the dead has made death’s sting impotent. Death is only momentary, not eternal. By the grace of God, something much better lies ahead for all who trust in Jesus.

Through Jesus’ perfect life, painful crucifixion, and triumphant resurrection, God defeated the devil³⁰ and turned death upside down. While most people are “scared to

death” of death, God says, “**Precious** in the sight of the Lord is the **death** of His saints” (Psalm 116:15). While billions of people are paralyzed by the fear of dying, Paul says, “**to die is [actually] gain**” (Philippians 1:21). Why? Because for the Christian, “to depart and be with Christ...is **far better**” than anything this world has to offer (Philippians 1:23).

An eternal afterlife with the Lord certainly beats all the earthly stress, suffering, and sorrow. But, it also beats the best day you have ever had. Much better than any rest, relaxation, or recreation; much better than any wedding day, birthday, or holiday is the day that a born-again child of God leaves this physical realm to go be with God (John 3:3,5). Paul rejoiced that “we are always confident knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.... We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:6,8).

CONCLUSION

ATHEISM says there is nothing to look forward to after this physical life. Agnosticism says life beyond the grave is unknowable. Skepticism scoffs at anyone who claims any understanding of life after death. Yet, Jesus said, “[Y]ou shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.... I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die”³¹ (John 8:32; 11:25-26).

Yes, the way of Jesus Christ is to “always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a **reason** for the **hope** that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). This hope (an expectation of resurrection and eternal life) is based on real, rightly-believed reasons,³² which logically lead to

an eruption of positive feelings and emotions about the “inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, **reserved in heaven for you**” (1 Peter 1:4, NIV). Until that time, Christians can and should joyfully meditate on, look forward to, and “eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Philippians 3:20-21; cf. 2 Peter 3:10-13).

How can a person make sense of life and death? How can we realistically not fear it but actually look forward to it? (1) Know God. (2) Know His Word. (3) Know Jesus. And by God’s grace, (4) faithfully and fervently “seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ Who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:1-4).³³

ENDNOTES

¹ In his *New York Times* best-selling book *The God Delusion* (2006), Dr. Richard Dawkins (arguably the most famous atheist in the world today), called God an “infanticidal, genocidal...capriciously malevolent bully,” p. 248.

² Jean-Paul Sartre (1989), “Existentialism is Humanism,” in *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre*, ed. Walter Kaufman, trans. Philip Mairet (Ogden, UT: Meridian Publishing Company), <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>, emp. added.

³ Jo Marchant (2008), “We Should Act Like the Animals We Are,” *New Scientist*, 200[2678]:44, October 18-24.

⁴ George B. Johnson (1994), *Biology: Visualizing Life* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston), p. 453.

⁵ Marchant, p. 44.

⁶ Peter Singer (2000), *Writings on an Ethical Life* (New York: Harper Collins), p. 193, emp. added.

⁷ Dr. Giubilini is a “Senior Research fellow on the Oxford Martin Programme on

Collective Responsibility for Infectious Disease” (<https://www.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/people/dr-alberto-giubilini>).

⁸ Dr. Francesca Minerva is currently a research fellow at the University of Milan. Much of her work is in the area of applied ethics. She is also the co-founder and co-editor of the *Journal of Controversial Ideas*. For more information, see www.francescaminerva.com.

⁹ Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva (2013), “After-Birth Abortion: Why Should the Baby Live?” *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 39[5]:261, <https://jme.bmj.com/content/medethics/39/5/261.full.pdf>, emp. added; <https://jme.bmj.com/content/39/5/261>.

¹⁰ Ibid., 39[5]:263.

¹¹ Ibid., emp. added.

¹² Giubilini and Minerva wrote: “What we are suggesting is that, if interests of actual people should prevail, then after-birth abortion should be considered a permissible option for women who would be damaged by giving up their newborns for adoption” (39[5]:263).

¹³ “We are His” (ASV, NIV, RSV).

¹⁴ That is, God’s perfect attributes of honesty, love, holiness, justice, etc. have never been and will never be compromised in His interaction with and treatment of His human creation.

¹⁵ Kevin Loria (2016), “Neil deGrasse Tyson Thinks There’s a ‘Very High’ Chance the Universe is just a Simulation,” *Business Insider*, <https://www.businessinsider.com/neil-degrasse-tyson-thinks-the-universe-might-be-a-simulation-2016-12>.

¹⁶ Ibid., emp. added.

¹⁷ Michael Lazar (2016), “Could the Universe Be a Simulation? Neil deGrasse Tyson Thinks It Might,” *Huffington Post*, May 1, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-lazar/could-the-universe-be-a-s_b_9816034.html.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ And would any human have the right to challenge the aliens as being under a particular code of ethics?

²⁰ See <https://apologeticspress.org/category/existence-of-god/>. See also <https://apologeticspress.org/issue/does-god-exist/>.

²¹ Genesis 1:28. Cf. Genesis 3:20b.

²² For more discussion on what happens when we die, see Dave Miller (2002), “One Second After Death,” <https://apologeticspress.org/one-second-after-death-1188/>.

²³ Everyone who has reached the level of mental maturity (sometimes referred to

as “the age of accountability”) so that he or she understands what sin is (cf. 1 John 3:4; 5:17) has sinned (Romans 3:10,23; 1 John 1:8).

²⁴ “The Amorites were so numerous and powerful a tribe in Canaan that they are sometimes named for the whole of the ancient inhabitants, as they are here.” [Robert Jamieson, et al. (1997), *Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Bible Commentary* (Electronic Database: Biblesoft).]

²⁵ See Kyle Butt (2002), “Do Babies Go to Hell When They Die?” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/do-babies-go-to-hell-when-they-die-1201/>.

²⁶ Children living among very wicked people are exposed to depraved behavior which they almost always begin to emulate. For God to remove children from such an iniquitous environment is quite compassionate.

²⁷ “[F]lesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” so faithful followers of God “shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet” (1 Corinthians 15:50,52). They will “be caught up...in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). On the other hand, all those who rejected Jesus as their Creator, Savior, and King—those who refused to submit to Him in this life—will be sentenced by Jesus to “everlasting punishment...prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:46,41). Those individuals will have some kind of form that will feel the pain of eternal punishment in a place of “fire that shall never be quenched” (Mark 9:43).

²⁸ What’s more, death itself, for everyone at any time, **in a sense** is “God ending their lives.” We may call the death of a 100-year-old person a “natural death,” but it is God Who designed death and allows it to happen (apart from the Tree of Life). Thus, death is merely a “timing” and “manner” issue, and not an “if” question.

²⁹ Habakkuk 1:13; Isaiah 59:1-2; 1 John 1:5-10.

³⁰ Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:14.

³¹ That is, “Though he die a temporal death, he shall not continue under its power for ever; but shall have a resurrection to life eternal” [Adam Clarke (1996), *Adam Clarke’s Commentary* (Electronic Database: Biblesoft)].

³² E.g., the resurrection of Jesus—1 Peter 1:3.

³³ For a free PDF copy of *Receiving the Gift of Salvation*, see <https://apologeticspress.org/issue/receiving-the-gift-of-salvation/>.



for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers” (1 Corinthians 14:22). Unbelievers would hardly be impressed if a Christian merely babbled in mindless gibberish. But he would be very impressed—and would sit up and take notice—if a Christian began speaking his language, well knowing that the speaker did not know that language on his own.²

ENDNOTES

¹ AMPC, BRG, JUB, MEV, NMB, VOICE, YLT.

² I am reminded of the 1947 film *Miracle on 34th Street* in which a Dutch girl, newly arrived from an orphanage in Rotterdam, is brought by her adopted mother to Macy’s to see Santa. The forlorn child is clearly in the throes of loneliness as she is separated from her country and culture, and unable to converse with others in her birth language. When Kris Kringle suddenly addresses the girl in her native tongue, she instantly lights up with excitement and wonder that Santa can speak Dutch. Therein lies the power of 1st-century tongue speaking. For a lengthy discussion of this subject and miracles in general, see Dave Miller (2020), *Modern-Day Miracles? Do Miracles, Tongue Speaking, & Holy Spirit Baptism Occur Today?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

IN Paul’s discussion of miraculous capabilities bestowed upon first century Christians in the church at Corinth, he repeatedly refers to the gift of tongue-speaking. The insertion of the word “unknown” before the word “tongue” (*glossa*) in 1 Corinthians 14 occurs six times in the KJV (vss. 2,4,13,14,19,27), with some other translations generally reflecting the same practice.¹ The Greek word for “tongue” was used in antiquity to refer both to the physical organ of speech, as well as to spoken languages. Unfortunately, the word “unknown” lends itself to the misconception that the Corinthians spoke in ecstatic utterances or “heavenly” languages that no humans naturally spoke. Such thinking has provided impetus for the charismatic movement’s practice of unintelligible gibberish to which the speaker or interpreter may then assign subjective, alleged meanings.

However, both the context, as well as the occurrence of tongue-speaking elsewhere in the New Testament, demonstrates that the practice consisted solely of **known** human languages that were **unknown** to the one speaking the language, i.e., the speaker had no prior training by which to learn or know the language. He spoke the language strictly by God’s miraculous empowerment. Undoubtedly, the insertion of “unknown” by the

KJV translators was not intended to convey the idea that the tongues were unknown **to all humans** and, as such, were non-earthly, non-human languages.

Acts 2 illustrates how tongue-speaking functioned in the early church. The miraculous endowment by the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak foreign human languages (which they had not studied) to people from a variety of geographical locales (e.g., Parthians, Medes, Arabians—Acts 2:9-11). That is precisely why Paul made the point that “tongues are

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

September 7	Florence, AL	(256) 764-0104
September 16-18	West Plains, MO	(417) 256-6317
September 21	Birmingham, AL	(205) 822-5610

Eric Lyons

September 11-14	Ashland, MS	(662) 837-4806
September 15	Denver, CO	(303) 986-4521
September 16-18	Huntsville, AL	(256) 895-8717
September 23-25	Ypsilanti, MI	(734) 485-2930
September 28	Hoover, AL	(205) 822-5610

Dave Miller

September 9-11	Gurley, AL	(256) 776-2695
September 16-17	Denver, CO	(303) 986-5800
September 18	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985

Jeff Miller

September 4	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
September 11-16	AZ, UT, CO	(501) 760-3110

**NOTE FROM***The Editor****New Book: Scientists Speak Out About God & Evolution***

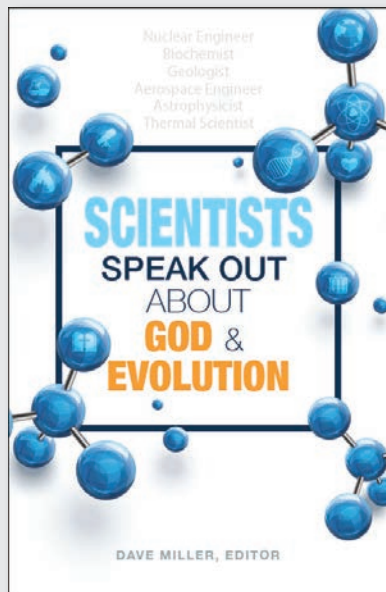
Growing up in post-World War II America, several generations of American children have been treated to a thoroughly post-Christian worldview. Consequently, many Americans no longer believe in the Bible as the Word of God. They do not believe the biblical account of Creation in Genesis 1-2. Instead, they have been convinced by their public education that the Earth is ancient, that life upon Earth arose spontaneously and gradually evolved over millions of years into the variety of animal life now on the planet—including the naturalistic origin of human beings. The propaganda has been so intense and so widely perpetrated that it would be difficult even to get the attention of those who have embraced the atheistic viewpoint. They have become accustomed to living life without any sense of moral accountability to a Higher Being. Why would they now want to alter their belief system?

The scientific community is thoroughly dominated by a naturalistic, atheistic outlook. Nev-

ertheless, one inconvenient truth is the fact that a considerable number of credibly credentialed scientists reject the naturalistic framework. The fact is that many well-qualified scientists reject organic evolution and naturalism. Many believe instead in the God of the Bible and the Bible's depiction of the natural order.

AP is pleased to announce the release of a new book that responds to this current state of affairs. The book contains an assimilation of a variety of evidences that are inexplicable apart from the Divine Being. This scientific evidence is presented by six credentialed scientists who possess the knowledge, expertise, and insight that qualify them to set forward their findings.

Dave Miller



**See Center Spread
for More Details**